

INTEGRATED SAFEGUARDS DATA SHEET

CONCEPT STAGE

Report No.: ISDSC8284

Date ISDS Prepared/Updated: 30-Apr-2015

Date ISDS Approved/Disclosed: 01-May-2015

I. BASIC INFORMATION

A. Basic Project Data

Country:	Afghanistan	Project ID:	P145347
Project Name:	Trans-Hindukush Road Connectivity Project (P145347)		
Task Team Leader(s):	Andreas Schliessler,Luquan Tian		
Estimated Appraisal Date:	27-Jul-2015	Estimated Board Date:	15-Sep-2015
Managing Unit:	GTIDR	Lending Instrument:	Investment Project Financing
Sector(s):	Rural and Inter-Urban Roads and Highways (85%), Telecommunications (10%), Public administration- Transportation (5%)		
Theme(s):	Regional integration (80%), Rural services and infrastructure (20%)		
Financing (In USD Million)			
Total Project Cost:	250.00	Total Bank Financing:	250.00
Financing Gap:	0.00		
Financing Source			Amount
BORROWER/RECIPIENT			0.00
IDA Grant			250.00
Total			250.00
Environmental Category:	A - Full Assessment		
Is this a Repeater project?	No		

B. Project Objectives

The project development objective is improved road transport connectivity across the Hindukush mountain range between the Kabul region and Baghlan.

C. Project Description

The proposed project would achieve the Project Development Objective through the implementation of the two project components described below. The total project cost is estimated at US\$250

million.

Component 1: Road construction (US\$240 million). Component 1 will include (i) civil works for the rehabilitation and maintenance of two separate roads, namely the B2B road and the Salang highway, (ii) consulting services, for the supervision of works for the same roads and for regular technical audits by an independent international auditor to verify that road works have been executed in compliance with the technical specifications, and (iii) goods, which will include a small number of equipment items which MPW may need to keep the two roads open during construction. The MPW already commissioned and received detailed feasibility and design studies for the two roads, which the World Bank team reviewed and which will be further refined during project preparation. Design of the highway includes all the road safety features typically applied under international good practice. The finalized technical design of the Baghlan to Bamiyan road will include ducts and fiber optic cables. The new cable along this road will therefore also become part of the "data highway" for Afghanistan and provide a backup loop for the existing trans-Hindukush cable along the Salang highway. For procurement purposes the civil works will be divided into smaller lots in order to facilitate the participation of local groups and contractors and to make the best possible use of their capabilities. This is also expected to reduce the security risk for the project since this procurement strategy is expected to generate strong support by local communities, including in areas dominated by insurgent forces. It is estimated that within the total cost of Component, about US\$ 170 million will be spent on the Baghlan to Bamiyan road, US\$ 55 million will be spent on the Salang highway and tunnel, while the remainder of US\$ 15 million will be spent on goods and services benefitting both roads.

Component 2: Institutional support and project management (US\$ 10 million). This component will be comprised of several subcomponents:

- a) Road Safety. This will include a review of the existing design for the two roads with the specific purpose of detecting and remedying any potential design deficiencies in terms of road safety. This activity will be combined with practical training of engineers at the MPWH on road safety issues.
- b) Definition of asset management arrangements for the trans-Hindukush roads. This subcomponent will include activities to define the most appropriate arrangements for the effective and efficient management, operation and maintenance of the newly upgraded roads, after their completion. This will include a study on the feasibility of introducing tolling and outsourcing the management of the roads to the private sector. The objective is to avoid a repetition of the cycle of quick road deterioration observed in the past due to the lack of enforcement of axle load limits, inadequate management and maintenance, the excessive use of snow chains, and the absence of incentives for good management. The Bank team will work with IFC to develop an appropriate solution involving the private sector. The setup for the management of the trans-Hindukush roads will be also developed with the added objective of generating social benefits for the communities living along the road, such as the use of small and medium-sized local firms whenever this is possible and efficient.
- c) Information and communications campaign. This will include the design and execution of MPW's information and communications campaign for the purpose of building public and stakeholder support for upgrading of the two roads. This is especially important because the construction works will occasionally cause disruptions of the normal traffic patterns. The communications/outreach campaign is expected to include ICT-based citizen feedback mechanisms

and will also promote road safety awareness among road users.

d) Training and capacity building. This subcomponent will include resources to fund various types of training and capacity building for staff of the MPW and DPW.

e) Project management support, including the cost of the Project Management Unit (PMU) operation.

D. Project location and salient physical characteristics relevant to the safeguard analysis (if known)

The project will undertake physical works on two separate roads:

- On the Salang highway (87 km length) which is located between Charikar and Pol-e-Khomri in the northern region of Afghanistan. Civil works will be limited to repairs, rehabilitation and maintenance, located entirely within the existing right-of-way of the road, with NO widening which would affect slopes or would require land acquisition or resettlement.
- On the Baghlan to Bamiyan road (152 km), works will upgrade the road to paved standard. The works will essentially take place within the existing right-of-way of the road. Widening will be needed at some locations, requiring very limited land acquisition and resettlement.

Both roads pass through heavily mountainous terrain typical for much of Northern Afghanistan. It is characterized by steep slopes and undulating hills that are mostly unprotected as there is very little vegetative cover on most of these slopes. During the winter months, the slopes are covered with snow as the mean elevation is about 2500 m above sea level.

The existing Baghlan to Bamiyan road is an unpaved 2-lane road. The planned civil works in the proposed project consist mostly of the construction of a new asphalt concrete pavement along the entire length of the road. Works will also include the improvement of the drainage system, retaining walls, etc. The present width of the road is between 8 and 12 meters, with a few pinchpoints as narrow as 5 meters. The width of the rehabilitated road is expected to 10 m (with two 3.5m lanes with 1.5m road shoulder on either side). The widening of the road at some points will require some land acquisition and rather limited resettlement.

In terms of environmental impact, the widening of the Baghlan to Bamiyan road at some locations will require significant cutting of slopes and filling of valley areas, albeit mostly within the existing road corridor and alignment. Due to these unprotected slopes, significant erosion and therefore sediment transportation and deposition are expected and need to be mitigated. The landscape is otherwise unremarkable as there are no forests and no known significant natural habitats.

An EIA for the Baghlan to Bamiyan road project was carried out in 2011 by USAID and SIDA. It covers the same civil works which are to be carried out under the proposed project. The EIA found that potential adverse environmental impacts on human populations or environmentally important areas are limited and site specific; few of them are irreversible. On the other hand, the project brings about positive environmental impacts, such as soil erosion protection. A review to the EIA and updating with the new information are needed in the preparation stage and a detailed and quality ESMP is critical to the implementation of project.

USAID has also commissioned a Social Impact Assessment (SIA) of the proposed B2B road in 2009, which the implementing partner are now updating to re-assess any risks to affected communities and to consider alternatives to minimize land acquisition impacts. There will be a household census of all

affected households undertaken to update the Social Management Plan (SMP) prepared by MoPH in 2012 and to formulate development strategies in the form of a comprehensive Resettlement Action Plan (RAP) in order to assist in determining project impacts on the social, economic, cultural, and livelihood activities of the affected communities.

Once the detailed designs for specific road sections are finalized and if resettlement/land acquisition is foreseen, a Resettlement Action Plan (RAP) will be prepared by the client and submitted to the Bank for clearance. The Implementing partner and relevant governmental agencies (i.e. ARAZI) will be responsible for implementing the RAP(s) prior to commencement of civil works. The final version of RAP(s) as well as the updated SIA will be disclosed in-country in local languages and through the InfoShop, before appraisal of the project.

E. Borrowers Institutional Capacity for Safeguard Policies

The client is the Ministry of Public Works, and over the past several years the Bank and other donors have implemented several road projects with them throughout the country. Additionally, the environmental and social officers in this ministry have benefitted from several training events organized by the Bank office in Kabul. Therefore, the ministry staff is familiar with World Bank safeguards policies and has experience with implementing Bank-supported projects. Their capacity over the years has progressively increased but they will still need significant support going forward and the TT will continue to provide this support to ensure the safeguards aspects of the proposed project are managed adequately.

The client capacity to implement land acquisition and resettlement is good and reliable, since MoPW is responsible for implementation of the ongoing WB supported NERAP and ARAP projects. The borrower has already hired a Social Safeguards Focal Officer, who will be responsible for the day to day implementation of social safeguards. B2B project will organize social safeguards training for project staff including the field staff to strengthen their capacity for preparation and implementation of the Resettlement Action Plan.

F. Environmental and Social Safeguards Specialists on the Team

Asta Olesen (GSURR)

James Orehmie Monday (GENDR)

Mohammad Yasin Noori (GSURR)

Obaidullah Hidayat (GENDR)

II. SAFEGUARD POLICIES THAT MIGHT APPLY

Safeguard Policies	Triggered?	Explanation (Optional)
Environmental Assessment OP/BP 4.01	Yes	The proposed project is classified as Category A. The mountainous terrain through which this corridor passes will pose significant challenges due to soil erosion and sediment transportation concerns, risks of slides from potentially unstable slopes, storm water drainage concerns, etc. Additional risks include road safety concerns and difficulty with suitably disposing of spoil material. These concerns, if not properly addressed, would have significant environmental impacts that could be irreversible.

		<p>Therefore, consistent with OP4.01, this project has been assigned an EA Category A. No protected areas or forest reserves are traversed by the civil works planned under this project.</p> <p>Appropriate measures to ensure occupational health and safety to workers and safety of the general public will be included in all contracts for civil works.</p> <p>A thorough EIA was carried out in 2011 by USAID and SIDA which found that potential adverse environmental impacts on human populations or environmentally important areas are very limited and site specific.</p> <p>The TT will ask the client to update the 2011 EIA with the new project information and to prepare a detailed and quality ESMP.</p> <p>The TT will also work with the client to ensure that participatory and meaningful consultations are held during the updating of the 2011 EIA, and that a record of these consultations will be included in an annex in the updated EIA.</p> <p>The updated EIA will be translated into Pashto and Dari, and then locally disclosed in the project area, and at the Infoshop, before appraisal of the project.</p>
Natural Habitats OP/BP 4.04	No	No known natural habitats in project area.
Forests OP/BP 4.36	No	No forests in project area.
Pest Management OP 4.09	No	Not applicable due to type of project.
Physical Cultural Resources OP/BP 4.11	No	The SIA commissioned by USAID provides no indication of existence of Physical Cultural Resources within the proposed road alignment, therefore it is unlikely to impact any known historical and cultural monuments. The project documents will nevertheless include chance find procedures according to National Law.
Indigenous Peoples OP/BP 4.10	No	No recognized indigenous people present in project area.
Involuntary Resettlement OP/BP 4.12	Yes	Based on the project's preliminary design, the upgraded road is expected to 10 meters wide, with two 3.5 meter wide lanes and 1.5meter wide road shoulders on each side. The existing road width is between 8 and 12 meters, with some pinch points of only 5 meters wide. The Project will therefore require some minor land acquisition and resettlement.

Safety of Dams OP/BP 4.37	No	Not applicable, since no dams are be built under the project.
Projects on International Waterways OP/BP 7.50	No	Not applicable.
Projects in Disputed Areas OP/BP 7.60	No	Not applicable.

III. SAFEGUARD PREPARATION PLAN

A. Tentative target date for preparing the PAD Stage ISDS: 16-Jun-2014

B. Time frame for launching and completing the safeguard-related studies that may be needed.

The specific studies and their timing¹ should be specified in the PAD-stage ISDS:

The existing ESIA/ESMP and the existing RAP will be reviewed and updated as needed, and disclosed. The expected date for disclosure is May 15, 2015, but in any case the disclosure will take place before project appraisal.

IV. APPROVALS

Task Team Leader(s):	Name: Andreas Schliessler,Luquan Tian	
<i>Approved By:</i>		
Safeguards Advisor:	Name: Francis V. Fragano (SA)	Date: 30-Apr-2015
Practice Manager/ Manager:	Name: Shigeyuki Sakaki (PMGR)	Date: 01-May-2015

¹ Reminder: The Bank's Disclosure Policy requires that safeguard-related documents be disclosed before appraisal (i) at the InfoShop and (ii) in country, at publicly accessible locations and in a form and language that are accessible to potentially affected persons.